



# Brownfields Assessment Demonstration Pilot

***Ocala, FL***

Outreach and Special Projects Staff (5101)

Quick Reference Fact Sheet

EPA's Brownfields Economic Redevelopment Initiative is designed to empower states, communities, and other stakeholders in economic redevelopment to work together in a timely manner to prevent, assess, safely clean up, and sustainably reuse brownfields. A brownfield is a site, or portion thereof, that has actual or perceived contamination and an active potential for redevelopment or reuse. EPA is funding: assessment demonstration pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to assess brownfields sites and to test cleanup and redevelopment models; job training pilot programs (each funded up to \$200,000 over two years), to provide training for residents of communities affected by brownfields to facilitate cleanup of brownfields sites and prepare trainees for future employment in the environmental field; and, cleanup revolving loan fund programs (each funded up to \$500,000 over five years) to capitalize loan funds to make loans for the environmental cleanup of brownfields. These pilot programs are intended to provide EPA, states, tribes, municipalities, and communities with useful information and strategies as they continue to seek new methods to promote a unified approach to site assessment, environmental cleanup, and redevelopment.

## BACKGROUND

EPA has selected the City of Ocala for a Brownfields Pilot. Ocala (population 44,000) is one of the fastest-growing cities in the United States and occupies 39 square miles of Marion County. In 1900, Ocala was a center of industry; however, its downtown area currently has an unemployment rate of 20 percent and a poverty rate of 49 percent, as business and industry have closed down or moved out of the city.

As the century progressed, the industries that once made Ocala prosper gradually moved to the outlying areas where land was more plentiful, less expensive, and closer to the interstate highway. Buildings and structures were left vacant and over time became blighted. The jobs at operations such as foundries, lumber mills, blacksmith shops, fertilizer plants, railroad depots, and newspaper plants moved away and many of the residential neighborhoods supporting these factories also fell into decline. In 1998, the city designated a 108-square-block area of downtown as a Community Redevelopment Area (CRA) in need of revitalization. There are 400 parcels of land in the CRA, many with unknown environmental contamination.

## PILOT SNAPSHOT



Ocala, Florida

Date of Announcement:  
June 1999

Amount: \$200,000

Profile: The Pilot targets a 108-square-block area in downtown Ocala that has been designated a Community Redevelopment Area.

### Contacts:

Intergovernment Risk  
Management Department  
City of Ocala  
(352) 629-8359

Regional Brownfields Team  
U.S. EPA - Region 4  
(404) 562-8661

Visit the EPA Region 4 Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/region4/wastepgs/brownfpgs/bf.htm>

For further information, including specific Pilot contacts, additional Pilot information, brownfields news and events, and publications and links, visit the EPA Brownfields web site at:  
<http://www.epa.gov/brownfields/>

## OBJECTIVES

The Pilot's objective is to address potential soil and groundwater contamination at the CRA properties. With community input, the city created the Downtown Development Commission (DDC), a five-member board consisting of property owners, merchants, and business leaders within the CRA. The DDC oversees the implementation of the CRA plan, which includes a 30-year, long-range revitalization plan addressing land use, traffic, pedestrian issues, housing, recreation, conservation, and infrastructure needs. Additionally, the goal of "Renew OCALA"—the city's brownfields program office—is to fully utilize the existing brownfields properties in the city. Renew OCALA will share the information gathered by the Pilot with the community and will provide community-related support for the Phase I and II assessments in the brownfields area. The Pilot will provide a baseline of environmental data for the city to continue to plan its redevelopment approach.

## ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND ACTIVITIES

Activities planned as part of this Pilot include:

- Conducting Phase I and II site assessments in the redevelopment area; and
- Hiring a Project Coordinator to provide support to the Pilot and conduct outreach.

The cooperative agreement for this Pilot has not yet been negotiated; therefore, activities described in this fact sheet are subject to change.